



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**TURKMENISTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

# Designing Lessons for Turkmen Schools

### **USAID project develops model health lessons for secondary school curriculum**



PEAKS training.  
Photo: PEAKS

***Turkmenistan's Ministry of Health and Medical Industry partners with the USAID Participation, Education, and Knowledge Project to introduce modern teaching methods.***

In Turkmenistan, the education system is in severe crisis. Quality is rapidly declining, infrastructure is dismaying, and management is heavily centralized. Parents and communities, key stakeholders in education, have restricted role in decision making. The USAID Participation, Education, and Knowledge Strengthening (PEAKS) Project, implemented successfully in three other countries of Central Asia, uses limited available opportunities to

establish models for quality improvement and create momentum for development. While at higher levels progress is uneven, teachers and community members readily embrace the ideas and approaches promoted by PEAKS.

Last year, secondary school curriculum in Turkmenistan was expanded to include Health Lessons, to cover topics of personal hygiene; disease prevention; first aid; the harm of tobacco-smoking; drug and alcohol abuse; and similar issues. To ensure that the new program uses interactive teaching methods, the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry requested that USAID develop model lessons for the curriculum.

The materials for the model lessons were first introduced to a group of 25 Gorono and Ministry of Health specialists and school administrators. In a three-day training, PEAKS professionals presented the materials and worked with participants to develop model lessons. Upon their return to school, administrators conducted similar workshops for teachers. During summer school camps, the lessons were piloted with students, who found them both useful and interesting.

Based on this experience and positive feedback from the participants of the pilot, the specialists of the Ministry of Health and PEAKS provided additional training to a group of 24 teachers and school administrators. The Ministry of Health and PEAKS are now developing the next cycle of model lessons on bird flu.

Such partnership not only provides teachers with new, valuable information regarding health, but also introduces them to teaching methods that help present new material in a clear, interesting, and memorable format. In addition, the knowledge that teachers gain during training can be applied to other school subjects.